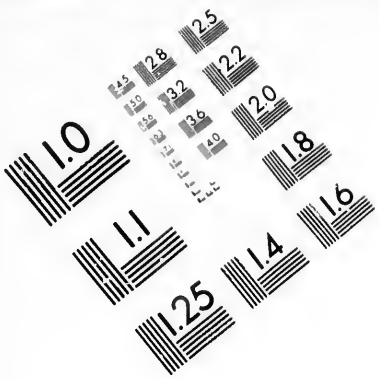

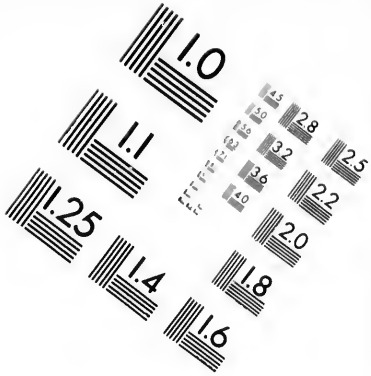

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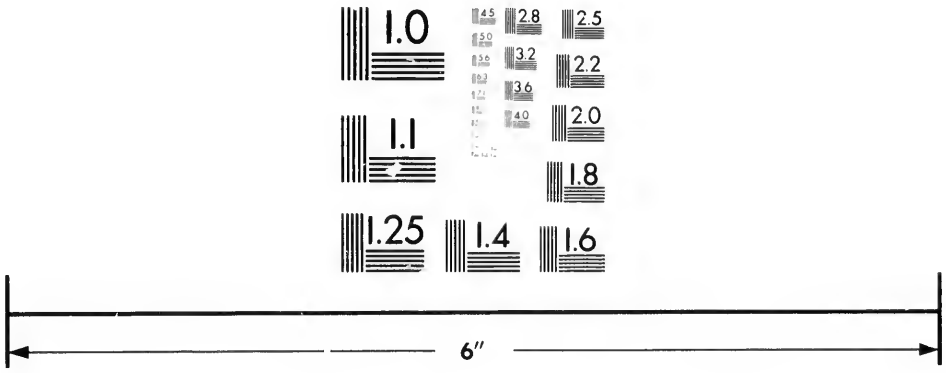

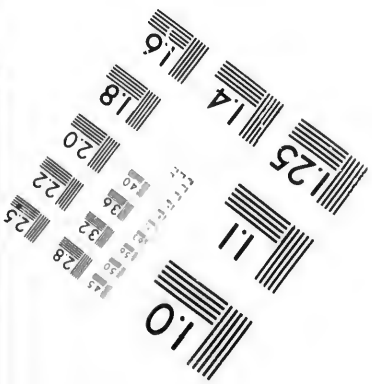

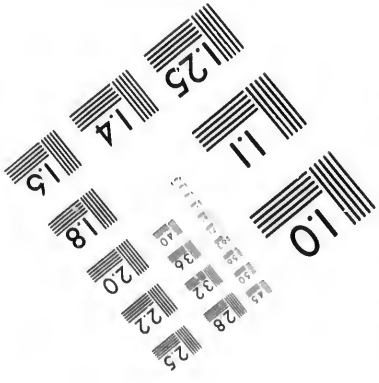

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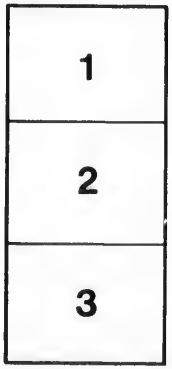

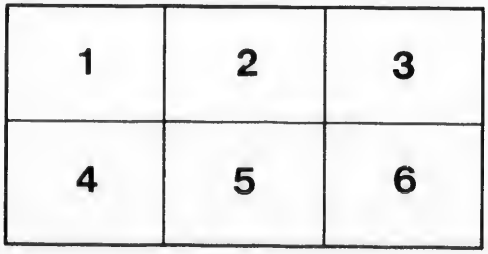

THE ERIE CANAL.

ITS ORIGIN CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE TO

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, JOSHUA FORMAN,

JAMES GEDDES AND JESSE HAWLEY.

THE

ERIE CANAL.

THE QUESTION OF THE

ORIGIN OF THE ERIE CANAL.

CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, JOSHUA FORMAN, JAMES GEDDES AND JESSE HAWLEY.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY, JULY 9TH, 1872.

By MERWIN S. HAWLEY.

Bigelow Brothers, Printers, 60, 62 and 64 Pearl St., Buffalo.

1872
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THE ERIE CANAL.

The general subject of the origin of the Erie Canal, and especially the question: "Who was the first projector? Who first promulgated the project for such a canal and called public attention to its feasibility and utility?" has been amply discussed before this society and settled in favor of the author of that series of communications signed "Hercules," which appeared in the newspaper called the *Genesee Messenger*, printed in Canandaigua, N. Y., beginning October 27th, 1807; and public interest in this branch of the subject is perhaps surfeited, if not quite exhausted.

The absorbing interest in regard to this canal at the present time relates to the best method of making it adequate to the wants of the great and increasing traffic between the East and West, and effectual to retain and promote the commercial prosperity of our State by maintaining its supremacy in the domestic commerce of our common country; and in this connection the value of one of the propositions of "Hercules" is being more fully appreciated, viz.: that the canal be made one hundred feet wide and ten feet deep.

The importance to our State and people of putting this canal in a condition to accommodate all the traffic that may be offered to it, at very low or nominal rates of toll, which is now being so generally recognized, was briefly but distinctly set forth in a paper read by me before the Club of this society on the third of February, 1868, which paper also, in connection with the paper read by me, February 21, 1866, shows the history of the origin of this canal from known and recorded facts and circumstances, by which our conclusions in the matter have been reached.

But a due regard for the truth of this history, and that we may readily perceive some of the fallacies that have been employed in discussing the subject, by persons occupying an erroneous standpoint, and brush away some of the mists with which length of time surrounds human memories, and so correct some errors to which official names have given the semblance of truth, render it proper to analyze and develop the facts and the circumstances of this history, from the standpoint of the records, a little further.

In regard to the question of the "first projector" of this canal, the paper read on the third of February, 1868, already referred to, notices and refutes the claim in behalf of GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, which was advocated by GEORGE GEDDES, Esq., on the fourth of February, 1867—and which is based upon the recollections of sundry persons as stated by themselves some twenty and fifty years after the occurrences which they relate as having transpired,—and upon an erroneous construction of the letter written by Mr. MORRIS to JOHN PARISH, dated December 20th, 1800, disregarding all the other writings of Mr. MORRIS and other important conversations on the subject of improvements.

The claim in behalf of the "Hercules" essays is based on the facts that they were the first publication of the project for an overland canal to Lake Erie; and were published to the world at the time they were written; and the assurance of their author that the views they promulgate were original with him, without having been communicated by any person; with the conviction that the impartial reader of those essays at the present day will not fail to discover in them internal evidence of their originality with the author. And it is a recorded fact that ELKANAH WATSON, DEWITT CLINTON and others, ascribe to those essays the first intimation of the project which they had been able to find. The research and the personal knowledge of ELKANAH WATSON in regard to the origin and progress of internal improvements, and of the persons indentified with

them, were greater than any of his cotemporaries who wrote on these subjects; and that DEWITT CLINTON was well and correctly informed on the same subjects need not be proven here.

It was claimed by me, and the gentlemen of the club approved the proposition, that a question of this kind should be determined by the actions or the unambiguous writings or statements of the persons, recorded or known at the time of their occurrence; instead of relying upon the memory of other persons through a long course of years, or on a forced and erroneous construction of one letter, rendered ambiguous, perhaps, by events subsequent to its date, when other writings of the same person give abundant evidence of his meaning.

This latter method was the only one available to Mr. GEDDES, by which to advocate his claim in behalf of Mr. MORRIS as the "first projector," and also the claim that JAMES GEDDES was entitled to precedence over JESSE HAWLEY in connection with the project; arguing that JAMES GEDDES had "received the idea" second-handed from Mr. MORRIS, and had communicated it to Mr. HAWLEY.

I have no desire to open this question; but reasons already indicated seem to require a further exposition of some of the facts and their attendant circumstances as they appear on the pages of history; and while doing this, I feel justified in adopting, to a small extent, the same basis of reasoning used by GEORGE GEDDES, for the purpose of showing in what manner JAMES GEDDES and his friend JOSHUA FORMAN received their first intimation of the project for an overland canal from Lake Erie to tidewater.

In the paper read by me on the third of February, 1868, previously referred to, it is shown that it is impossible to reconcile the letter of Mr. MORRIS to JOHN PARISH, dated December 20th, 1800, with the proposition that MORRIS had in his mind, when writing that letter, any idea of a communication by water with Lake Erie by the overland route, or by any

route except by the way of Lake Ontario, around Niagara Falls by the contemplated ship canal, for the construction of which, a company had been incorporated in 1798.

Mr. MORRIS was possessed of a vigorous mind and of clear ideas, and he had a rare facility of expressing himself on paper. He did not write ambiguous letters, although sometimes romantic. When writing his beautiful letters to Mr. PARISH in December, 1800, he writes from the standpoint of his recently traveled route to Fort Erie and "so back again," and of his knowledge of the business route of the Western Inland Lock Navigation Company, and of the projected Niagara Ship Canal; and that letter has been made to appear ambiguous perhaps by the projection and successful completion of the overland canal since its date, or at least its meaning has been perverted by claimants for fame in connection with this canal since the decease of Mr. MORRIS, and after the success and popularity of this work had become well assured; although the letter of MORRIS to GEN. HENRY LEE, written about thirty days after the date of that letter to JOHN PARISH, shows to a certainty that his meaning was "to sail —— into Lake Erie" by the Ontario route.

It is also shown in the paper read on the third of February, 1868, that it is impossible to reconcile the statements of Mr. DEWITT in his letter to WILLIAM DARBY, in 1822, about his interview with Mr. MORRIS at Schenectady, in 1803,—with other conversations and writings on the same subject, by Mr. MORRIS, while pursuing his way on that journey.

I am not questioning the integrity of purpose in Mr. DEWITT for writing as he did in the letter above mentioned. That letter purports to give from memory the substance of an informal conversation between Mr. MORRIS and himself nineteen years previously,—about the first of September, 1803,—while the conversation and writing of Mr. MORRIS a few days afterward, show that he had then no project nor any conception of one, for a water communication with Lake Erie except by a canal

"from the head of Onondaga river as far east as it will go on that level; if practicable, into the Mohawk river,"—and that "a branch might easily be carried to Lake Ontario * * * at Oswego," thence to Lake Erie by the contemplated ship canal.

The public mind in those localities was strongly exercised at that time in regard to improved means of communication, long expected but only partially realized, by the Western Inland Lock Navigation Company—and Mr. MORRIS was contriving methods of communication between tide-water and his large estates in St. Lawrence County; and while Mr. DEWITT'S position would naturally interest him in projects for public improvements, the isolated condition of Onondaga County would incline her people to regard with intense favor any measure that gave promise of an easy access to eastern markets; and it is not surprising that some of those people should erroneously connect in their imagination those early efforts in behalf of local improvements with the first movements in favor of this greater and more extensive enterprise.

Between the years 1803 and 1822 very much had been said and written and accomplished in regard to the Erie Canal,—at the latter date it was far progressed towards completion,—many persons had acquired well merited fame in connection with its commencement and progress, and some persons were discussing the question of who was entitled to the honors due to its first projector,—in which discussions the innate modesty of the author of the "Hercules" essays forbade him to take any part.

Mr. DEWITT'S official position made him an observant of all this; very many matters, official and unofficial, communicated verbally, must have had his attention and then passed from his memory; and it would be strange indeed if his recollections had not become confused in regard to many things he had heard about canals. His interview with Mr. MORRIS in 1803 at Schenectady would naturally afford pleasant recollections, and also that a prominent topic of conversation was the

improvement of facilities for transportation; and as, in 1822, the Erie Canal was so far advanced in its progress of construction as to have become an "artificial river" almost across the State, it was very easy for him (and it is not surprising that he did so) to connect in his imagination the conversation of Mr. MORRIS nineteen years previously, with this gigantic work which for several years had absorbed public attention, and so be led to write as he did to Mr. DARBY, that the remarks of Mr. MORRIS in reference to such local improvements as were engaging his attention and efforts in 1803, were made in reference to an overland canal.

Mr. DEWITT wrote from the standpoint of a successful and popular enterprise, then nearly completed and extending *through* the State, while the remarks of Mr. MORRIS were from the standpoint of several local improvements having the Onondaga river and Lake Ontario as their termination, with a ship canal around Niagara Falls; and did not refer to a direct overland canal to Lake Erie, as is fully shown by his conversation with Mr. BROADHEAD at Rome, as he continued on that journey, and by the memorandum he made in his diary at Three River Point, on September 12, 1803, while further prosecuting that journey, and well substantiated by the fact that, although Mr. DEWITT and Mr. MORRIS were on terms of personal intimacy for many years, both being members of the first Board of Commissioners for Exploration in 1810, no record is found in existence to show that Mr. MORRIS entertained any idea of an overland canal to Lake Erie until July 12, 1810.

The resolution passed by the Legislature of 1808, on the motion of Judge FORMAN, directed the Surveyor General to cause a survey to be made "of the rivers, streams and waters in the *usual route* of communication between Hudson River and Lake Erie, and such other contemplated route as *he may think proper;*" and Surveyor-General DEWITT appointed JAMES GEDDES to perform that public service. From Mr. DEWITT'S letter of instructions to Mr. GEDDES, I quote as follows: "You

will, in the *first place*, examine what may appear to be the best place for a canal from Oneida Lake to Lake Ontario in the town of Mexico, and take a survey and level of it; also whether a canal cannot be made between Oneida Lake and Oswego, by a route in part to the west of Oswego River. The *next object* will be the ground between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, which *must be examined* with a view to determine what will be the most eligible track for a canal from below Niagara Falls to Lake Erie. * * As Mr. JOSEPH ELLICOTT has given me a description of the country from Tonawanda creek to the Genesee river, and pointed out a route for a canal through that tract, it is important to have a continuation of it explored to the Seneca river. No leveling or survey of it *will be necessary* for the present. * * A view of the ground only, with such information as may be obtained from others, is all that can now be required of you."

The "usual route" mentioned in the legislative resolution was none other than the "Ontario route," a portage company being employed around Niagara Falls; and it was wholly in the discretion of Mr. DEWITT whether any other route should be explored, and to what extent another route should participate in this development of its advantages. If he had heard an overland route portrayed so vividly in 1803,—as he states ninteen years afterwards,—his memory would have been quickened upon it in 1808 by Mr. FORMAN'S proposition and speech in the Legislature; and his patriotism would have influenced his discretion to direct that a large portion of the surveyor's time and expense should be devoted to explorations for that overland route. Instead of doing so, he directed that the first efforts, the second efforts, and almost the whole time and efforts of that surveyor should be devoted to the advancement of that route for "sailing into Lake Erie"—which Mr. MORRIS contemplated in 1800, when writing to JOHN PARISH; and to which he referred in 1803, when conversing with Mr. DEWITT at Schenectady;—viz. the "Ontario route."

In Mr. DEWITT's letter of instructions to JAMES GEDDES, which is dated June 11, 1808, he says: "As Mr. JOSEPH ELLICOTT *has* given me a description of the country from Tonawanda creek to the Genesee river," &c. Mr. DEWITT intended, doubtless, to write to Mr. ELLICOTT for that information, as he afterwards did; and he felt assured he would get it, as Mr. ELLICOTT was competent to give it, and too patriotic to withhold it when applied to. But Mr. DEWITT had not received that information from Mr. ELLICOTT at the date of his instruction to JAMES GEDDES, as Mr. DEWITT's letter to Mr. ELLICOTT asking for this information is dated June 13th, 1808, and Mr. ELLICOTT's reply is dated July 30th, 1808.

Among other instances that might be shown of Mr. DEWITT's forgetfulness or confusion of facts, I will cite only one more, viz: the questions of veracity and of fact growing out of statements in Mr. DEWITT's letter to WILLIAM DARBY, and resented by Mr. FORMAN, in his letter to Doctor HOSACK.

It is thus seen that Mr. DEWITT must have "misapprehended" and misapplied the remarks of Mr. MORRIS in 1803, when the former wrote the letter to WILLIAM DARBY in 1822; as it is shown that Mr. MORRIS could not have had in mind any project for an overland canal to Lake Erie, and therefore he could not, and did not, communicate such a project to Mr. DEWITT; and it follows that Mr. DEWITT did not communicate the idea of such a project to JAMES GEDDES in the winter of 1804; and that JAMES GEDDES did not communicate it to JESSE HAWLEY at their interview in Geneva, "in the winter of 1806," "the winter before he wrote his essays." And it also follows that the efforts of JAMES GEDDES to form public opinion in favor of a canal until 1807, when, as a result of those efforts, JOSHUA FORMAN was elected to the Legislature as a "canal man," were *not* directed by considerations of a canal "across the country, and not by Lake Ontario," but those efforts were directed to questions respecting such local canals as Mr. MORRIS had indicated in his diary, and to which he

had reference in his conversation with Mr. DEWITT at Schenectady in 1803, and which was communicated to JAMES GEDDES at the legislative session of 1804; and the proposition for such improvements at that time was well adapted to arouse the enthusiasm of the people of Onondaga, and lead them to elect to the Legislature a *canal* man of sufficient influence to procure an appropriation for surveying the ground for any proposed improvements that would give them better facilities for reaching the seabord markets; and with this view they elected to the Assembly in April, 1807, the "Union Ticket" of JOHN MCWHORTER, a Democrat, and JOSHUA FORMAN, a Federal, under the caption of "Canal Ticket;" and CLARK'S History of Onondaga says: "Mr. FORMAN was elected upon the express understanding that he would try to procure the appropriation of money to make examinations of the country."

In reference to the interview between JAMES GEDDES and JESSE HAWLEY at Geneva "in the winter of 1806,"—Mr. HAWLEY, in his letter to Doctor HOSACK, in 1828, written in response to a call for information on the subject of the canal, and being the first time he was known to take up his pen to assert or vindicate his claim to priority in this matter,—writes as follows: "I saw Judge GEDDES at Utica, in April, 1804, for the first time; he was returning from the Legislature; I saw him again at Geneva in the winter of 1806,—this was about ten months after I had suggested" to Col. MYNDERSE, "the idea of an overland canal; again I saw him at his house in Onondaga in September, 1811,—he had then surveyed a part of the route under the direction of the first Board of Commissioners, when we conversed on the subject, I believe for the first time; I do not recollect that any mention was made of it when we met at Geneva,—if there was, I presume that I first spoke of it."

If Judge GEDDES had "received the idea of passing a canal over the country to Lake Erie, from the Surveyor-General in the winter of 1804,"—and if the idea had made such a "vivid

impression on his mind," as he states twenty-five years afterwards that it did, he would have given some expression to it when, on his way home in April following, he had an interview at Utica with Mr. HAWLEY, who was then a merchant at Geneva, and was much interested in any project for public improvements. But no such communication was made. If he had "received an idea" which he regarded as so momentous in 1804, and was unable to bring the subject before that Legislature, of which he was a member, he would of course propose to one of his representatives the next winter, that legislative attention should be called to the subject; or, neglecting that, he would surely have solicited his neighbor JASPER HOPPER, who was one of the members from Onondaga in 1806, to press upon the authorities at Albany an idea of so much importance; and yet there is no record nor any pretence that any such action was taken or contemplated until the election of Mr. FORMAN to the Legislature of 1808;—and yet Mr. FORMAN himself gives a *full contradiction* to the "idea" which it is pretended has been *handed down* from Mr. MORRIS, and to the statement that he was elected on the theory of an overland canal. And if Judge GEDDES had been so much impressed with the paramount importance of an overland route as has been claimed, he could not have consented as he did, without some strong remonstrance, to carry out the instructions of the Surveyor-General, and expend the whole sum appropriated for his expenses and the entire summer and autumn in exploring the Ontario route, including the Niagara Ship Canal project; which service Judge GEDDES says he "entered upon with enthusiasm;" and yet, from the information derived from the "Hercules" essays, or upon the suggestion contained in the closing paragraph of his instructions, he was induced to make a cursory winter examination between the Seneca and Genesee rivers; and he left his home in the month of December and devoted some days amidst the snows, for that purpose.

Valuable as that winter examination may be called, as one of the preliminaries to the great enterprise which was commenced a few years afterwards, the labors and explorations of that whole season, together with Judge GEDDES' report and other written statements, are *so inconsistent* with the pretence that it "was not an agreeable work for him to survey the Ontario route," and that "his views were all directed to finding a practical route overland," that they leave *no alternative* to the conclusion that both Judge GEDDES and Mr. DEWITT were intent upon and absorbed with a determined purpose to advance the interests of that route to Ontario and thence to Lake Erie, which, in the years 1800 and 1803, had engaged the pen and dictated the conservation of GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Although Mr. FORMAN was elected in April, 1807 (elections being then in the spring), the first and regular session of that Legislature did not commence until January, 1808; and Mr. FORMAN had time during that interval to inform himself in regard to the question, so important to the isolated condition of the people of Onondaga, upon which he had been especially elected. That he improved the time, to some extent, for that purpose, and for increasing his abilities for usefulness to the State as well as to his constituents, will appear from the sequel.

In 1807 Mr. FORMAN was a lawyer, having his office at Onondaga Hollow. JAMES GEDDES also lived in that vicinity. He writes in 1829: "Between the years 1804 and 1808 I had often conversed with my neighbor, Judge FORMAN, on the subject of the canal to Lake Erie." And Mr. FORMAN says he conversed freely with Judge GEDDES on the subject. BENAJAH BYINGTON also lived in the same vicinity, and he held the office of Justice of the Peace. The *Genesee Messenger* was published in Canandaigua, and among its agents in most of the central counties in the State, who were authorized to receive subscriptions and payments for it, was JASPER HOPPER, the Postmaster at Onondaga Hollow. Doctor HOSACK says of this newspaper: "It was then extensively circulated." No news-

paper but one of respectability and general circulation would be likely to secure the services as its agent of such a man as JASPER HOPPER.

The first number of the series of essays by JESSE HAWLEY, signed "Hercules," had for its caption, "Observations on Canals," in full capital letters, and was published in the *Genesee Messenger*, October 27th, 1807, occupying a conspicuous position on the first page of the paper. The second number, in which the route for the canal is traced from Lake Erie to the Mohawk, was published November 3d, 1807. The third and the fourth numbers, in which are discussed the length of time requisite, and the size of the canal that should be adopted, were published on the tenth and the seventeenth of November, 1807, respectively. The fifth number, in which the probable cost of such a canal and its commercial utility are treated of, was published November 24th, 1807. The sixth number, in which its agricultural and commercial importance is profoundly discussed, was published December 8th, 1807. The seventh and the eighth numbers, which are devoted to the question of the resources of capital, were published respectively on the fifteenth and the twenty-second of December, 1807. The remaining numbers are devoted to pointing out other improvements in various portions of the United States; number ten, particularly, showing the great resources and the growing power of the State of New York, if this canal shall be constructed, and setting forth the project for the Champlain Canal.

As has been already remarked, the impartial reader of those essays will not be in doubt about their originality. Doctor HOSACK says of them: "They must have had great influence in preparing the legislative measures that succeeded."

The action of Mr. FORMAN in the Assembly for procuring surveys in the interior, was in February, 1808, three months subsequent to the date of the newspaper which contained the delineation of the route for the canal; and as Mr. FORMAN was not under the necessity of leaving his home to take his

seat in that Legislature until January, and his neighbor, JASPER HOPPER, the Post Master, was the agent for the *Genesee Messenger*, and of course was early supplied with every number of that newspaper, Mr. FORMAN had ample opportunity to study all those essays which related to the Erie Canal, before going to enter upon his official duties at Albany. And the coincidence between the views set forth and the language used by Mr. FORMAN, in his speech in support of the resolution he then offered, and the views and language of "Hercules," in the essays published on the third, tenth and twenty-fourth of November and on the fifteenth of December, 1807, suggests the probability that they originated in one and the same mind; and also that the promulgations of "Hercules" had stimulated Mr. FORMAN to the study of that lengthy and abstruse dissertation on canals in the sixth volume of Rees' Encyclopedia, which he did after arriving in Albany.

BENAJAH BYINGTON and JESSE HAWLEY had some correspondence upon this subject in August, 1835, which was published at the time.

Judge OLIVER R. STRONG, an early resident of Syracuse, and of the first respectability, says: "In the years 1807 and 1808 I knew BENAJAH BYINGTON very well. He was a Justice of the Peace, was a man of good education and general cultivation and respectability; and any letters he would write in regard to public matters, or to historic or current events in that vicinity, would be entitled to entire credibility; his veracity was unquestionable." And Judge STRONG adds: "I know BYINGTON must have been intimate with FORMAN, and often in his office."

Mr. BYINGTON wrote to Mr. HAWLEY under date of August 26th, 1835; from which letter I quote as follows: "I can state from recollection which is very distinct on the subject, that I lived near JOSHUA FORMAN (then a lawyer in Onondaga Hollow) in the years 1806, 1807 and 1808; that I was often in his office in those years, and there I saw the newspaper called

the *Genesee Messenger*, containing a series of publications on the subject of a route for a canal from Lake Erie to Utica, and recollect hearing remarks made at that time by Mr. FORMAN and others, on the subject of those publications. I spent a part of the winter of 1819–20 in Albany, with Judge FORMAN. In a conversation while there, he asked me if I recollected the publications which we had seen many years before in the *Genesee Messenger*, and had noticed how nearly the route there laid down corresponded with the route that had been adopted and was then in progress. I told him I had not seen those papers since about the time of their publication. He then invited me to go with him to ELKANAH WATSON'S, who kept a file of that paper. Mr. WATSON produced a file of the papers alluded to, and we amused ourselves in comparing the route you had proposed with the actual line adopted by the Commissioners, and were all surprised that so little deviation from the route you had laid down, had taken place. It was from them that I first learned that JESSE HAWLEY was the author of those publications, and from the conversation there had, I supposed they believed JESSE HAWLEY to be the first projector of the route of the canal which had been adopted by the State."

From Mr. HAWLEY'S letter to Mr. BYINGTON, I also quote the following: "While I claim the reputation of having first written on the subject of an overland canal, Judge FORMAN and Judge WRIGHT have the prominent reputation of being the first legislators who gave it an official consideration and set the ball of the project in motion; and it is highly gratifying to my feelings to learn from you that Judge FORMAN derived his first idea of it from my writings. This fact was, indeed, intimated to me by Dr. THOMAS H. RAWSON, formerly Superintendent of the Public Saltworks."

Dr. RAWSON was Superintendent of the salt springs in the year 1808, and occupying a public and official position, he might be expected to confer freely with Mr. FORMAN upon matters of public interest.

We have seen that those essays of "Hercules" were "the original and the first publication of the project for the overland route of the canal," and that the author of them did *not* "receive the suggestion as coming from GOUVERNEUR MORRIS."

We also learn from the well authenticated sources which have been set forth, that those essays did furnish both the inspiration and the material for that legislative action initiated by Mr. FORMAN in February, 1808; and, as we have the statements of both Mr. FORMAN and JAMES GEDDES, that they were on terms of frequent and friendly intercourse during several years about that period, and often conversed together on the subject of internal improvements, freely exchanging views and plans with each other, the conclusion is unavoidable, that they both derived their first impressions in favor of an overland route to Lake Erie, from the same source.

The *Genesee Messenger* had its agent, the Postmaster in that village, the county seat of Onondaga, and the paper must have been very generally seen and read there; Mr. GEDDES and Mr. FORMAN were reading and thinking men; both were diligently seeking information in regard to any measures that would be likely to benefit the country of their residence; and we cannot perpetrate such an indignity to their intelligence and patriotism, nor so entirely disregard all the known evidences bearing upon the case, as to permit a doubt that both of those gentlemen read the essays of "Hercules" in November and December, 1807, within forty-eight hours after the newspapers which contained them, were printed.

In addition, therefore, to the claim of priority and originality in regard to the project of an overland canal, made by and in behalf of the author of the "Hercules" essays, I also claim, as the inevitable conclusion from all the recorded facts and circumstances connected with the subject which are known to the public, that JAMES GEDDES received his first intimations of that project from the communications of JESSE HAWLEY.